



THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER

1974

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THE PRESIDENT AND OFFICE BEARERS
SEND THEIR SINCERE CHRISTMAS GREETINGS
AND VERY BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR
TO ALL OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS.



"I must go, dear, John's calling me to help him decorate the tree!"

THERE WILL BE NO MEETING IN DECEMBER. Instead, we will have our usual Christmas Night at Carss' Cottage, which, this year, will take the form of a Bar-B-Q followed by bright music provided by artists from the Brandman Studio Rockdale. (See more in the Social Secretary's Report).

A MEMORIAL TO TOM KELLY.

Mrs. Sylvia Kelly, our Social Secretary, has thought of a splendid idea for a memorial to her late husband, (and our friend) Tom.

For some time the Management Committee has considered the introduction of a Society Badge to which a name-plate could be fixed, but we could not think of a suitable design and consequently nothing was done.

Now Mrs. Kelly has donated the die of a gold-coloured Badge bearing the picture of Carss' Cottage. The Badge is the size of a 5-cent piece and is surrounded by a red border bearing the inscription, in gold letters, "The Kogarah Historical Society. Carss' Cottage". Mrs. Kelly has provided the Society with a Badge for each of the Office Bearers, each mounted on a small enamelled name-plate with the name of the office.

The Society greatly appreciates this generous gift by Mrs. Kelly and congratulates her on the selection of such a novel and very useful form of memorial to one we have all admired.

Members will no doubt wish to receive a Badge and a name-plate bearing their own names. At the time of writing the exact cost is not known but it will probably be \$3.50.

Social Secretary's Report.

"A Duet For Two Hands". This was a fine performance by the Illawarra Guild Players and was so successful that it was extended for a further week. I am sure all enjoyed the night.

Vision Valley Tour. Once again we were lucky enough to have fine weather. Although we started off in a drizzle, it was fine in Dural. A quick tour of Swane's 40-acre Nursery just wasn't long enough to admire the thousands of plants -- then on to Vision Valley. The beautiful peaceful scenery and spacious grounds, gum tree chapel, Historic Chapel and other places of interest captured everyone's imagination.

From there to visit the Historic Jude's Church. This beautiful miniature masterpiece with the tiniest stained glass windows was built in 1846 and reflects the love and attention it must surely receive. We enjoyed just looking at it.

December 12th - Xmas Bar-B-Q. Bookings are now closed for this function and we are looking forward to another pleasant evening in the open.

Bar-B-Q serves will be on from 7 p.m. This will be followed by some bright entertainment from the Brandman Music Studio.

The Social Committee extends the Seasons Greetings to all and many thanks for the support given by Members to all functions held during the year.

Sylvia Kelly.

MUSEUM COMMITTEE REPORT.

Attendants at Carss' Cottage have encountered a great variety of weather conditions on November's four Sundays, but their reports indicate that whatever the weather, visitors enjoyed their inspections of the Museum, and many expressed their appreciation of the Society's work, with praise for the exhibits, offers of assistance and gifts for the Museum collection.

Our Society has been further honoured by Mr. Philip Geeves, who in October, gave us a most informative talk, entitled "Marconi and Australia".

Following this address, which gave members much insight into the early history of radio, Mr. Geeves kindly offered to lend the society four most interesting microphones, used on historic occasions in Australia, during the 1920's and 1930's.

We are very privileged to be able to display these at Carss' Cottage and we are sure you will enjoy and appreciate seeing them when next you visit the Museum.

Committee members hope to arrange this exhibit very promptly, as it will be of great interest to everyone.

To Mr. Geeves we express sincere appreciation for the loan of these special items, and the following information regarding the four microphones:

1. Marble block Peisz microphone used in 1927 to broadcast the official opening of Parliament House, Canberra, and Australia's contribution to the first Empire-wide broadcast.
2. The carbon microphone through which Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith spoke to Australia after his epic Trans-Pacific flight in 1928.
3. This R.C.A. induction microphone was used for many historic broadcasts including Australia's Sesqui-centenary celebrations in 1938 and the Declaration of War - 1939.
4. This velocity microphone saw many years' service in A.W.A.'s recording studio, where it was used by Australia's finest artists, both dramatic and musical. It was the microphone which recorded many episodes of popular radio serials such as "The Air Adventures of Biggles", "When a Girl Marries", "Hester's Diary", "The Humphrey Bishop Cavalcade", etc.

In addition, we would like to thank Mrs. Marcelle MacMillan, of Fairy Meadow for her gift of a lady's parasol, of floral patterned cretonne, and more than fifty years old.

Also, we thank Mr. J. Gifford, of Kogarah, for his donation of a bootmakers last.

We have a number of articles representing various industries and crafts of earlier times, and a plan for their display has been basically worked out. Lack of space - and time - are immediate problems but we hope to overcome these in the New Year.

Another plan for the coming year, is to open the Museum for a week or so, but further details of this idea are still being discussed. More information in January.

Several members have added their names to the list of Museum attendants, and we thank them for doing so. They will be rostered for duty in the New Year.

MUSEUM ROSTER (Phone 57-5940 if inconvenient).

December	15th	--	Mrs. S. McOnie and Miss M. Foley
"	22nd	--	Mrs. K. Slater and Mr. K. Grieve
"	29th	--	Mrs. G. Johns and Mrs. G. Taylor
January	5th	--	Mrs. J. James and Miss D. McLean
"	12th	--	Mrs. S. Kelly and Mr. N. Kelly
"	19th	--	Mr. and Mrs. R. Holmes

For Boxing Day (December 26th) and New Year's Day (January 1st - Volunteers are again requested. If you would like to help on either of these days, please ring me (57-5940).

Gwen Lean.

LIBRARY REPORT.

"Historic Houses of Australia" Volume 3, prepared by the Australian Council of National Trusts, printed by Cassell Aust. Ltd.

This is the third volume in the National Trust's series on Australia's great historic buildings.

When European immigrants settled in Australia they built houses in styles remembered from their homeland and in varying degrees tempered them with practical and artistic adaptations to suit their new environment. Gradually styles developed which were characteristically Australian.

In this volume, 37 of Australia's historic houses are described and superbly illustrated. Chronologically the selection covers a hundred years from 1790 (Old Government House, Parramatta) to 1890 (Government House, A.C.T.)

Stylistically the houses range from the simple Jolimont in Melbourne, through houses of Georgian tradition to Gothic Houses, such as Vaucluse in Sydney, and Mansions of the Victorian land-boom. As well as houses of distinctive European lineage the coverage includes early examples of styles now regarded as traditionally Australian, such as Ralahyne, a fine instance of the Queensland development of a house on stilts surrounded by a splendid verandah. Then there are houses unique in themselves, for example the elaborate mansion of Illawarra in Melbourne, built in the last frenzied years of the land boom.

The hopes and ideals of some of Australia's leading families were expressed in these houses and this volume is a valuable contribution to the architectural story of Australia's houses, and gives a glimpse of the life within.

Colleen McEwen.

Prairievale Girl Guides' Hall Opened. (Kindly written for us by Assistant District Commissioner, Miss Yvonne Boyd).

Records show that Guiding began in the South Hurstville area many years ago, but it wasn't until after the last world war that it really began as it is today.

A Brownie Pack was already in operation in 1952 when a Guide Company was opened at Connell's Point. This Guide Company held meetings in the Connell's Bay Scout hall, while the Brownies were meeting in the Hurstville Grove Scout hall.

In 1955 a meeting was called with a view to forming a Local Association (a committee usually made up of parents but open to any interested adult). This was done and soon afterwards a second Brownie Pack was opened. This Pack met in the Connell's Bay Scout hall.

In 1962 a second Guide Company and another Brownie Pack were opened at Blakehurst. Meetings being held in the Blakehurst Scout hall.

The Local Association of the day felt that there was a very great need for a Guide hall in the District as naturally the guides and brownies were very restricted in their use of meeting places. Equipment etc. had to be stored at the Leaders' homes and much valuable training time was lost each meeting in "setting up".

The difficulty was in finding a suitable site but in 1962 Kogarah Council granted the Guides a lease of part of Prairievale Park. This was ideal as it was right in the centre of the Guide District.

However, in 1963, the South Hurstville Guide District was divided with South Hurstville and Blakehurst becoming two separate districts, with neither district feeling strong enough to undertake the building of a hall.

Guiding was still progressing, however, and in 1973 it was decided to explore the possibility of the two districts being rejoined, with a view to once again making plans for a hall.

1974 officially saw South Hurstville and Blakehurst Guide Districts rejoined under the new name of Prairievale.

With \$2,000 in hand the Local Association now set out to build a guide hall. Kogarah Rotary Club agreed to make it their fund raising project for 1973/74 and the building firm of L.W. Giles agreed to become "honorary builders". Help by way of materials and fittings was received from various other firms.

Although not yet fully paid for, at long last the Prairievale District Guide Hall was officially opened on November 23rd 1974 by the State Commissioner for Girl Guides, Mrs. Raymonde Read.

The District now consists of two Guide Companies; Two Brownie Packs and one Ranger Unit. Only the lack of Leaders at present prevents further expansion.

(During the Opening Ceremony the opportunity was taken to present Queen's Guides Badges to three Guides. I was happy to test one of these, Elizabeth O'Brien, for her Local History Badge. It is hoped that more guides will take an interest in local history. - V.S.S.)



"Will whoever is putting buttons in the collection plate please use their own buttons and not those from the pew cushions?"

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

Some Societies do not issue a Newsletter in December, but we HOPE that if we didn't send YOUR'S you would really miss it!

But this is the holiday season, so instead of including an article, as usual, we are merely giving you some items culled from various sources, interspersed with some excuses for a smile. And if, instead of smiling, you laugh out loud, this will make us happy.

WHITE ANTS IN CARSS' COTTAGE

Forty-six years ago - in 1928 - it was decided to demolish Carss' Cottage. The Council actually made the decision to erect another building to replace it and accepted a tender from a builder. Fortunately, for our Society, a rescission motion was lodged and - well, you read about it.

On the 13th August, 1928, Mr. C.W. Bardsley, the Health Inspector, provided the Council with this Report: "I have inspected the residence and found it in an exceedingly dangerous condition. The woodwork in places is riddled with white ants. The floor in one room is partly eaten away. Some of the roof timbers are simply thin shells. Two rafters have been dislodged to such an extent that they have fallen in on the ceiling. Several ceiling-joists are also badly eaten away and likewise some of the battens supporting the slates. I consider the roof is so dangerous that I instructed the Caretaker to move his furniture out of the two front rooms and not to occupy them until the place has been properly repaired.

In my opinion, the roof should be taken off and rebuilt. Floors, where defective, should be taken up and repaired, extra windows to be put in front two rooms and drainage attended to. The work should be undertaken without any delay whatsoever. I think it would pay the Council to obtain the advice of a white-ant expert to advise as to the best means to adopt to prevent a recurrence of the trouble".



Alf works at the Hovercraft factory.

(continued over leaf)

WANTED - A BANK

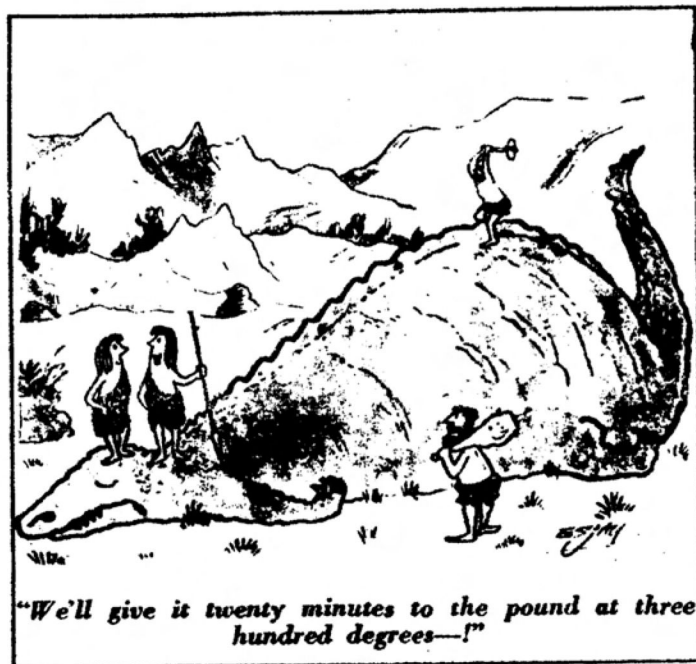
In January, 1904, in the very first edition of the "St. George Call", mention was made of the fact that in the suburbs to the south of Cook's River there was but one Bank - and that was the branch of the Bank of Australasia at Kogarah.

It was noted that numerous signed petitions had been presented to various City banks, but to no effect. "We must thus infer", says the paper, "that the amount of business to be obtained in St. George does not warrant another Bank".

Ten years before, local accounts were catered for by four banks. Hurstville and Rockdale had agencies of the Australian Joint Stock Bank while Kogarah and Hurstville each supported a branch of the Bank of Australasia. Ten years had passed since the Hurstville A.J.S. Bank closed its agency and the Bank of Australasia followed three years later. One year afterwards the A.J.S. Bank removed from Rockdale through insufficiency of business to pay working expenses.

It was observed that since the panic in 1893, the banks had been reluctant to keep open unprofitable branches and in the case of the A.J.S. Bank, over 100 branches had been withdrawn.

"Apparently a suburban banking business is not a very tempting or profitable one", said the Call, "and it is perhaps questionable if any one of the Illawarra Suburbs could support a bank. The Kogarah Bank of Australasia at present draws customers from Hurstville, Rockdale and Arncliffe. The railway service is now so frequent, and the Bank is situated so handy to the Kogarah Station, that residents in Hurstville and Rockdale are easily within reach of it. Another point is that a large number of residents keep their banking accounts in the City."

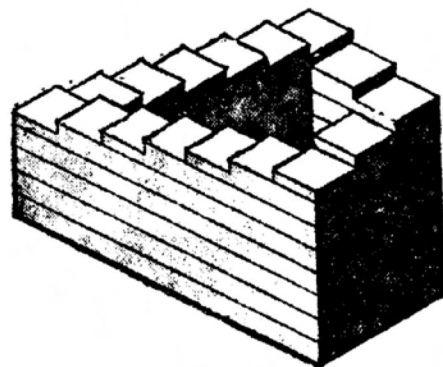


THE HISTORIAN'S AID

Here is an interesting invention which should be of great benefit to budding historians who travel on foot to investigate old estates and buildings, which are invariably situated on the top of steep hills. This is very tiring.

All you now do is to surround the site with a stairway constructed exactly like the model which we illustrate. You will be gratified to notice that if you do this, and walk in a clockwise direction, you can reach the very highest point by going DOWNstairs. This will be found most relaxing.

By the way - a prize of one dollar will be paid to the first 100 members who kindly tell us WHICH is the highest step.



SHARK-BAIT

Ignoring persuasion by members of the Ramsgate Surf Life Saving Club, on the occasion of the 1939 beach carnival, one of their members swam across Botany Bay from Kurnell to Ramsgate Beach without even the protection of a shark-proof net.

He was Tom Salmon, and he covered the seven miles in three and three-quarter hours. Salmon dived off from Kurnell at 11.40 a.m. and staggered on to Ramsgate Beach, with the aid of his club mates at 3.50 p.m. He was given a splendid ovation by nearly 5000 people who were present to watch the events at the annual carnival than being held.

Salmon intended to make the swim in a protective net, but when it was being brought from Sydney Harbour earlier on Saturday morning it broke and sank. It was intended to draw the net along with the aid of a launch. Salmon was an A.B. serving on H.M.A.S. Sydney and secured leave of absence to do the swim. He was 32 years of age and had a wife and six children.



★ "SLIPPERY little fellow, isn't he?"



"I don't remember his name, but we've kicked each other once or twice."

CHRISTMAS TIME IS FRIENDSHIP TIME

At Christmas time our hearts reach out,
To friends we think of dearly,
And checking through our friendship list
As all of us do yearly,
We stop awhile to reminisce
And to pleasantly review,
Happy little happenings
And things we used to do.

* * *

And though perhaps too busy
To keep in touch all year,
We send a Christmas Greeting
At this season of good cheer.
So Christmas time is a lovely link
Between old year and new,
That keeps the bond of friendship
Forever unbroken and true.

* * *



"On the other wall, stupid . . .!"

AND WE HOPE THAT YOUR HOME MAY BE EVEN
HAPPIER THAN THIS IN THE NEW YEAR.